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ABSTRACT

Growing out of a meeting to explore alternative directions for community-based education in the Teacher Corps Program, the three papers in this document provide insight into how neighborhood involvement, the coordination and collaborative delivery of human services, and the utilization of political processes can be used to strengthen a community's participation in its educational system. A study of neighborhoods is important to an understanding of how they behave and how they can be changed to solve human problems and to facilitate interaction between school personnel and community members. The Teacher Corps community council can play a central role in coordinating human service delivery and in building a political base to implement desired programs. The council can also encourage the development of community support systems as an important adjunct to the formal human service network. To be most effective, each Teacher Corps project should analyze the political structure of the community it serves and determine how this information can be beneficially used. Such analysis should encompass both formal and informal structures. A brief annotated bibliography is included. (Author/WD)

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Education Through Community Involvement

° Neighborhoods

° Human Resources

° Politics

Papers by:

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Frank Reissman
Bill Lynch

With an Annotated Bibliography by:

Roland Goddu

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FOREWORD

The three papers and selected annotated bibliography in this booklet were prepared for the Eastern Recruitment and Community Technical Resource Center in preparation for the Community Based Education strand of the 1978 Teacher Corps National Developmental Conference. The ideas for these papers resulted from a meeting of experienced practitioners which was held in San Destin, Florida during the spring of 1978. The purpose of this meeting was to explore alternative directions for community based education in the Teacher Corps Program in light of the 1978 revisions to the Teacher Corps legislation. These papers should serve projects by providing insights into how neighborhood involvement, the coordination and collaborative delivery of human services, and utilization of political processes can be used to strengthen a community's involvement in its educational system. The RCTR Centers hope you find these papers helpful to both, members within and outside of the Teacher Corps Family.

INVOLVING A COMMUNITY THROUGH ITS NEIGHBORHOODS

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INVOLVING A COMMUNITY THROUGH ITS NEIGHBORHOODS

Paul V. Collins

August, 1978

Any attempt to foster large-scale and on-going participation in the education process on the part of community people must take into account the concept of Social Action (interaction) that has become the dominant theoretical perspective in American sociology since World War II. Among its leading proponents have been Florian Zanniecki, Robert M. MacIver, Howard P. Becker, and Talcott Parsons.

The Social Action (interaction) theory holds that conduct is guided by awareness of other persons whose behavior is regarded as affecting attainment of his own ends. From this postulate various implications may be deducted which together constitute what may be termed an action frame of reference.

Parsons states that people's actions are prompted by one or a combination of three modes of motivational orientation.[1]

1. Cognitive mode — an interest in knowing or defining aspects of the situation.

2. Cathetic mode (cathexis) -- an interest in securing maximum gratification of needs dispositions.

3. Evaluative mode — an interest in ordered choice from the possible objectives in the situation.

Each individual is oriented to the expectations of the other persons in social interactions. Stable interactions require a shared common set of standards so that each individual knows what to expect from the other in the situation. When these stable and regulated motivated interactions of two or more people are oriented toward one another and toward a collective goal they constitute an organized system. Parsons calls this a social system.[2]

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1 Talcott, Parsons, Robert F. Bales, and Edward A. Shils, Working Papers in the Theory of Action (Glenco, Ill. The Free Press, 1953).

2 Talcott, Parsons. The Structure of Social Action (Glencoe, Ill. The Free Press, 1949).

The significant differences, both obvious and subtle between groups living in different localities, are the result of a changing complex of many factors. These combine to bring a group together in a given area, and it is exceedingly difficult to isolate the influence of any one since they are all interactive in determining the community character.

The simplest community is the neighborhood, the first grouping beyond the family which has social significance and which is conscious of some local unity. It is at this level that we must begin to examine political values and economic process, the history of its immigration and its external as well as internal accommodations and conflicts if we are to understand America's cultural pluralism and its diversities and contradictions.

Neighborhoods differ from communities in that they are smaller and not formally organized. Simply defined a neighborhood is an area containing a number of families who live near one another, share a similar culture, and are more or less well acquainted. As a rule a community includes a number of neighborhoods.

The neighborhood is not simply an aggregate of households or families but a system of patterns into which the units — families, occupations, and specializations of all kinds -- are fitted.

It is necessary to understand neighborhoods from the point of view of both structure and behavior. Each local neighborhood setting should be seen as having some capacity to facilitate, resist, or institute change. We should focus on the capacity of neighborhoods to generate problem coping structure. These types of neighborhoods are structural, not value categories, each with a different potential.

Our failure to recognize neighborhood structure and the process of influence that goes on (different types of communities are receptive to different types of influence) has been a major factor in our lack of success in involving community people in the life of the school. Because each neighborhood has a different structure and pattern of relationships, varying strategies are dictated as we begin any process for involving parents/community.

Donald I. and Rachelle B. Warren have developed a useful typology to better understand and describe the variety of highly specialized roles that neighborhoods can play in the lives of their residents. This typology is based on three important principles of organization: interaction, identity, and connections. Taken together these elements constitute a neighborhood organization that cuts across social class, income, and ethnic lines.[3]

In terms of specific questions to ask about a neighborhood, these dimensions can be put this way:

A. Interaction. During the year, do people in the neighborhood get together quite often?

B. Identity. Do people in the neighborhood feel that they have a lot in common?

C. Connections. Do many people in the neighborhood keep active in political parties and other forces outside the neighborhood?

Depending on how each question is answered, a specific neighborhood will fall into one of six types. A specific strategy is suggested for initiating interaction with each type of neighborhood.

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3 Donald I. Warren, and Rachelle B. Warren, "Six Kinds of Neighborhoods," Psychology Today (June 1975): 74-80.

We must develop experiences that help poeple make these distinctions. In the final analysis the purpose of the study of neighborhoods is to understand how it behaves, how it can be changed to solve human problems, and to help school people initiate interaction with community people for the purpose of involving them in the process of providing quality education for children.

COORDINATION OF HUMAN SERVICES DELIVERY

IN

A COMMUNITY IN ORDER TO PLAN

AND

IMPLEMENT MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMS

by

Frank Reissman

Coordination of Human Services Delivery in a Community in Order to Plan and Implement More Effective Community Based Programs

Frank Riessman

August 1, 1978

The Teacher Corps community council can play a central role in coordinating human service delivery. To take just one example, the community council could stimulate the local health agency to provide vision and auditory screening for all the children in the schools. This obviously meets a major community and education relevant need and ties the human service health agency more closely with the school system. There are countless other forms of integration of the human services which could be developed in this matter.

It is extremely important for the community council to recognize the nature of its power (as well as the limits of this power). The power of the community council resides in its ability to convene meetings, to call the various human service agencies together, to provide publicity regarding what they are doing or are not doing, to furnish consultation and technical assistance to a community based education program, and, finally, to hire a community organizer consultant who has roots and connections in the power structure of the community.

A critical factor in the institutionalization of any program (and institutionalization is a major requirement of all Teacher Corps programs) is the building of a political base; that is, the development of constituencies that desire the program to be implemented. This was a major feature in the success of the Career Opportunities program in EDPA. In that instance, various community based groups as well as the paraprofessional workers themselves, were a critical force in the implementation and dissemination of that program. The Teacher Corps' community council can mobilize resources in similar fashion for the implementation of the new Teacher Corps programs. They can do this by paying

careful attention to assessing the needs of the community, mobilizing resources to meet these needs, and increasing access to participation by groups in the community who have hitherto been on the outside removed from the mainstream of participation. The community council can be the hub around which are integrated various human service resources and nature resources in the community into a new gestalt or pattern which greatly expands their overall effectiveness.

While it is extremely important to consider the turf issues or needs of each of the different human service agencies, it may be possible to break through some of these turf considerations to build genuine coordination, thus expanding resources considerably and providing a more active voice for the community, its informal leaders, gatekeepers, etc. The identification of these informal leaders can be an essential role of the community council. Some of them obviously will be elected for that council, but direct, continuing relationship to others should be a high priority.

In any community there are a variety of community support systems, natural networks, mutual aid groups, informal gatekeepers that are critical in both assessing the needs of the community and providing resources to meet these needs, particularly if they are effectively integrated with human service agencies. People rely naturally and differentially for everyday support and assistance on relatives, neighbors, friends. This is because people require meaningful attachment to significant others; social integration in the network of common interest relationships; an opportunity for the nurturance of others; reassurance of individual worth gained through the performance of a social role; access to the obtaining of guidance from a trustworthy and authoritative person in times of stress.

Mutual intimacy and reciprocal services are a essential part of this supportive matrix. Considerable research evidence suggests that those who have social supports are protected in crisis from a wide variety of pathological states both mental and physical. It is thought that these supports buffer the individual from the potentially negative effects of undergoing crises and changes and facilitate coping and adaptation.

The central figures who provide these neighborhood based services occupy a pivotal linkage role to other providers in the human service delivery systems. It is critical that the formal human service care giving system develop methods which can identify and relate to these natural support systems, establishing close linkages. When the natural support systems are ineffectual or are absent, the appropriate professional role should be to strengthen, supplement, or stimulate the development of social support systems in the natural environment.

Emphasis should be placed on the development of models of articulation between the professional systems and natural support systems. The approach which we have outlined above is likely to become central to the development of any coordination of community based programs in the present environment. This is true for a number of reasons: scarcity of resources, the need for cost effective programs, the desire of people for community based programs rather than large nationally oriented programs based in Washington.

Cobb, S. "Social Support as a Moderator of Life," Psychosomatic Medicine, 38 (5), 1976.

Kaplan, G.R. From Aid to Teacher: The Story of the Career Opportunities Program. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977 (HEW Publication No. (OE) - 76-12010).

Warren, D. and Warren, R. Neighborhood Organizers Guidebook - University of Notre Dame, 1975.

THE HUMAN SERVICE PERSPECTIVE

ON

COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION

by

Frank Reissman

THE HUMAN SERVICE PERSPECTIVE ON COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION

Frank Riessman

August, 1978

In looking at the community from a human service perspective it is very clear that there are a variety of community based needs which the school and the Teacher Corps community council must acknowledge and relate to. Thus, in a large number of communities there will be an employment problem of young people as well as of olders. There will be special health problems, welfare problems, child care problems, issues related to delinquency, teenage pregnancy and many other human service needs that can be ascertained and delineated by paying close attention to the community.

The community council can highlight these needs and attempt to build a human service network which increases the articulation among the relevant agencies to insure that these needs are met in an integrated fashion. This integration should lead to a great resource expansion in the community and a reduction of the distance between the community and the human service agencies.

Another very important role rooted in the human service perspective of community based education is the encouragement of community support systems. Social support has been defined as information that tells a person he or she is valued and is part of a functioning social network based on a commitment of reciprocity and exchange. These social networks are a key resource in daily coping for the average person.

Throughout America, as in any society, there are personal and social networks of families, neighbors, and community organizations to which people naturally turn as they cope with their problems. Such assistance can help an individual through an emotional crisis, possibly preventing more serious disability. These supports are important adjuncts to the more formal human service

system. As we seek ways to improve human services it is important to recognize the strengths and potential that various support networks bring to different communities and neighborhoods and to recognize the need to develop linkages between these systems and the formal caregiving systems.

A community based human service program could be instrumental in helping the various agencies relate to these natural networks and community support systems residing within the community. They represent an enormous untapped human service resource, and the community council could play a major role in finding these groups and helping the human service network to relate to them fully. This would be a powerful and unique role for a community based program and would integrate human services around community needs.

An important tool for analyzing a neighborhood that could be utilized for enriching a community based education approach was developed by Donald and Rachel Warren in a handbook, entitled the Neighborhood Organizers Guidebook (University of Notre Dame, 1976). Also see Psychology Today, June 1975, for an article by the Warrens, entitled "Six Kinds of Neighborhoods." They introduce a diagnostic tool which classifies neighborhoods into eight different categories — "interaction," "heterogeneity," "identity," "mutual aid," "privatism," "insulation," "connections," "turnover" — and then suggest differential action intervention in relation to the diagnosis (See p. 76 of Psychology Today).

In applying a human service perspective, it is critical that we obtain sound information about the character of the community and that we establish good lines of contact with the informal leaders, the gatekeepers in the community. This will enable the Teacher Corps project to learn firsthand about the real human service needs of the particular neighborhood and thereby to build a well-grounded realistic program.

Report on the President's Commission on Mental Health, 1978, Volume 1, 2.

Warren, D. and Warren, R. "Six Kinds of Neighborhoods," Psychology Today (June 1975): 74-80.

THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

by

Bill Lynch

THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

by

Bill Lynch

August, 1978

For many years there has been a hostile attitude displayed toward politics and politicians by those persons most committed to social change and specifically, the "foot soliders" of the sixties with their visions of an equalitarian society. This paper does not purport to examine the basis of this hostility nor to determine whether or not it is justified. What I intend to show is that a Teacher Corps project may have disasterous results if it holds the belief of the incompatability of social change and a close collaboration with the political structure, both formal and informal, in their communities. The fact that Teacher Corps is a federally funded program whose monies are appropriated by Congress is certainly reason enough for each project to analyze the political structure of all levels of participants and determine how this information can be used to the benefit of the project. This paper will try to provide its readers with some strategies for analyzing and utilizing the political structure in a community. One cannot help but recognize that the terminology and strategies of institutionalization, a Teacher Corps focus, is also the terminology and strategy of political analysis of a community.

The first step in this assessment is to identify the formal political structure that impacts on a community. It is important to remember that this structure is composed of both paid and nonpaid elected officials. (By limiting the definition I have deliberately excluded the clergy in this discussion, though I recognize their influence and function in the community). Officials in this group may include the mayor, state senators, as well as the local board

of education and the school's P.T.A. president. When one examines who is elected, it is then possible to look at the individual constituencies that brought this about. Teacher Corps participants cannot be seduced into believing that once a school board member is elected, he or she forgets who was responsible.

This elected official has influence with a group of persons in a community and this person is charged with making policies which could affect a Teacher Corps project. And like Teacher Corps, an elected official is a temporary system whose aspirations and success depend on collaboration. It is incumbent upon each project to be able to identify the elected persons in the community and examine what role, if any, they could play; examine the sources of their power; and determine how influential they might be with regard to the success of a project.

A second strategy in making an analysis of a community requires that the project examine the existing relationship between the schools and the formal political structure. Often there seems to be little connection between the local school board and other elected officials. Or if a relationship exists, it is combatant at best. Knowing the various positions of these groups provides the project with an opportunity to share relevant information and possibly lessen areas of conflict.

The third strategy which evolves from this analysis is to develop lines of communication between the formal political structure and the Teacher Corps project. It is important to recognize that the communication is not for the purpose of publicizing Teacher Corps as such, but to inform those elected officials of the educational goals and objectives and to give them an opportunity to buy into a platform in which they may not have specific expertise, but which will be provided by the project throughout their tenure.

The fourth strategy, then, is to pick up on the communication lines which

have been established between the project and the politicans and involve them in meaningful activities. Some examples may be: invite the local state senator to your school and ask him/her to speak to classes, address assemblies, attend faculty conferences; provide information seminars and workshops to which elected officials are invited to participate and learn; solicit ideas from elected officials and provide them with materials concerning the project; ask for input at the planning stages.

These kinds of involvement activities insure continued lines of communication which ultimately result in strong support for project goals and objectives.

Up to this point I have addressed the analysis of and strategies to the formal political structure. Equally important to the success of a project is the informal structure that impacts upon the community. Frequently, it is more difficult to identify these players and the strategies that may be used will vary from situation to situation. A project must develop a cadre of keen observers who when attending meetings are able to watch audience reactions and responses to persons who are participating but who hold no formal title. Those persons who are able to elicit support are often the informal leaders. It must be cautioned that informal leadership is fluid. The spokesperson at one meeting may not surface again in this role for a long period. The keen observer taps into the resource at that time but understands the nature of this temporary alliance.

Other informal leaders who have been traditionally identified are persons such as the barber, beautician, local grocer, etc. These people at any given time can support a project and help signal its success or failure.

A sixth and final strategy/analysis requires the project to give and provide to the community. Up to this point the emphasis has been on soliciting support

from the community for the project. It is vitally necessary for projects to provide assistance to the community in activities other than those which originated with Teacher Corps. Examples of this strategy may include providing consultant services to neighborhood groups when they have projects. These "consultant services" may take the form of manning booths at fairs, providing editorial services for neighborhood newsletters, ringing bells in community campaigns. These are visible services in a give and take framework of collaboration and cooperation.

In summary, I have tried to present a few strategies and/or areas of analysis which examine the politics of education as they apply to developing and maintaining a successful Teacher Corps project. As one observes the focus of Teacher Corps and its emphasis on making lasting change through institutionalization of important components, the political structure of any given community must be reckoned with.

Selected Annotated Bibliography

IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION

R. Goddu, Northeastern University, August, 1978

1. Covello, Leonard. "A Community Centered School and the Problem of Housing." Educational Forum 7 (January 1943): 133-43.

Describes the rational, principles, and some procedures by which a school in a community can be used to generate adequate housing and to raise expectations of persons in this community. Of particular interest is the use of all units of the school to enable a community to acquire a visible, needed community resource—housing—usually thought to be outside of the purview of community based education.

2. Cremin, Lawrence A. The Transformation of the School. New York: Random House, 1964.

A discussion of those major influences that energized the progressive movement in education. Of special interest are chapter 3, "Culture and Community," chapter 5, "Pedagogical Pioneers," and chapter 7, "The Organization of Dissent." Community based education models such as the Gary Plan (p. 155), Hull House (p. 161), CCC Programs (p. 318) are discussed. Of particular utility are the bibliographical notes (pp. 363-66, pp. 370-74, and pp. 381-85), which describe ideas many key thinkers and writers have proposed.

3. Eisenstadt, Shumuel N. "Sociological Theory and an Analysis of the Dynamics of Civilizations and of Revolutions," Deadalus (Fall, 1977).

A discussion of ideas being developed to explain the civilizations that exist and the revolutions that are changing them. Of particular note for those interested in community based education are sections IX, p. 70, XI, p. 72, and XII p. 74. Concepts such as family, hierarchy, and entrepreneurs of major

interest in developing useful community based education concepts are discussed. The references section is particularly useful especially notes #21 and #22 which address "utopia" and "revolution".

4. Newman, Fred M. and Oliver, Donald W. "Education and Community," Harvard Educational Review 37, no. 1 (Winter 1967): 61-106.

A discussion of the notion of community in American society which includes a definition of community, an analysis of the influences on and premises of contemporary American education with regard to community. A community based concept for educational change is proposed which emphasizes three levels of activity: the school context, the community seminars, and the laboratory/work context. Some early examples of attempts to implement the model are described.

5. Rayan, Charlotte. The Open Partnership. New York: McGraw Hill, 1976.

A summary of ideas and procedures that have been utilized in American education to build cooperative, shared, program development arrangements among the key actors in school and community. Of particular utility to those interested in community based education are chapter 2 "Partnership Schools," which discusses in part the partnership method (pp. 17-22) and chapter 8 "Summary to Build a Partnership," which discusses a step-by-step process for building a workable partnership. (pp. 160-64).